

by a tangle of vines (sp. ?) and *Galium*. Two pale flesh-coloured eggs, uniformly covered with fine flesh marks and a few dark chestnut spots (color identification based on Palmer, 1962), were in a nest cup, 70 mm. in diameter and 30 mm. deep. Although the adult was at the nest, incubation probably had not started for the eggs were cold. On 13th June, the eggs were being incubated; on 21st June two nearly featherless young about four-six days old were seen; on 26th June the young had some short grey feathers; and on 1st July the young were well feathered but not yet able to fly (Buer, in prep.).

Onychognathus salvadorii, Bristle-crowned Starling: On 27th May, 1965, Beals (pers. comm.) discovered a solitary nest 2 m. above the ground in a hole of a stone wall within an arch of a stone bridge; young birds were heard calling, 10 km. north of Dire Dawa, about 1400 m., 9° 37' N., 41° 52' E. On 21st June, 1970, C.E.B. discovered two adults roosting on nests in a rock passage 50–75 m. inside an entrance of the Sof Omar caves, 116 km. east of Goba, about 1345 m., 6° 50' N., 40° 33' E. The two nests, made of sticks, stems and grass held together with clay, were on a narrow shelf of a vertical passage wall 4 m. above the floor of the cave. Laying had not started since the nests had no eggs. Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1960) erroneously give a description of the nest of the species, quoted from Sir G. Archer who, however, in his own work (Archer & Godman, 1961) wrote that this description refers to the nest of *Buphagus erythrorhynchus* not *O. salvadorii*.

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On *Smithornis capensis suabelicus* Grote, 1926

by P. A. Clancey

Received 7th September, 1970

Grote (1926) proposed *S. c. suabelicus* on a specimen collected at Magagoni, Ruvu=Pangani R., north-eastern Tanzania, on 30th June, 1910. I have recently studied this skin in detail, and find that it is a sub-adult ♂ with a flattened wing of 71, a tail of 53, and a culmen from base of 17 mm. In the second part of their interesting series of studies of Tanzanian birds, Ripley and Heinrich (1969) review the variation in the African Broadbill *Smithornis capensis* (Smith) in East Africa and employ Grote's name *suabelicus* for birds of the coastlands from the Pugu Hills, 50 km. S. of Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, south to Moçambique, commenting 'The name *suabelicus* is tentatively applied to this subspecies, because it is said in the original description . . . that this form is "smaller than *medianus*". . . However, the type of *suabelicus* was not examined, and therefore the applicability of this name to the populations of eastern Tanzania and of northern Moçambique needs confirmation'. Study of the type of *suabelicus* in association with material of other races from east, southern and western (Angola) Africa confirms the races for East Africa as laid down by Ripley and Heinrich, but indicates that adjustments require to be made to the names applied to two of the taxa recognized.

Variation in the African Broadbill affects general size, the colour and markings of the upper-parts, the intensity of the ventral streaking, and the crown of the ♀, which may be streaked in some races, plain black in others. Despite the fact that this is a species of liane tangles, thickets and evergreen forest, it quite clearly exposes itself freely to the sun in glades and clearings because in all populations the upper-parts lose their bronzy or citrine colour, changing in the space of three or four months to a nondescript greyish olive, and the ground to the underside whitens, the buff wash disappearing.

Ripley and Heinrich consider that the upper limit of the wing-length spectrum in coastal East African birds is 70, but this requires to be modified somewhat, as several measured by me from south-eastern Tanzania and Moçambique have flattened wings of slightly in excess of 71, and the wing-length spectrum of all eastern coastal birds from the Kenya coast, south to the Lebombo Mountains, in eastern Swaziland, and north-eastern Zululand is actually 66–72 mm. Birds as small as those of the Kenya coast have been measured from Mt. Gorongosa and Sul do Save, in Moçambique, so that the average smaller dimensions of the Kenya coast populations cannot be gainfully employed in arranging the eastern littoral birds into more than one generally acceptable subspecies. The flattened wing of the type of *suabelicus*, 71 mm., falls neatly within the determined variation of the eastern coastal populations.

Compared with examples of *S. c. medianus* Hartert and van Someren, 1916: Kiambu Forest, Nairobi, Kenya, the type of *suabelicus* differs in having the upper-parts paler, more ochraceous, less dull rusty olive-brown, the black sub-apical spotting to the dorsum on the whole more extensive, and the streaking below rather finer. The size is also smaller (wings in *medianus* 73–77 mm.). Compared with *S. c. meinertzhageni* van Someren, 1919: Lerondo, Kavirondo, Kenya, the upper-parts are paler and more ochraceous, less brownish, and below the streaking is paler, browner, and much finer. The slight difference in size is probably of no import.

On comparison with a good series of *S. c. cryptoleucus* Clancey, 1963: Bela Vista, Sul do Save, Moçambique, from Moçambique and eastern Swaziland, the type of *suabelicus* is found to be rather redder and richer above. Below, the ground colour is more creamy, less cold white, and the malar surfaces, breast sides, lateral body surfaces and flanks are more strongly washed with cream-buff, and the streaking is both paler, browner and finer.

In having a wing of 71 mm., the upper-parts about the Dresden Brown of Ridgway, the ventral streaking brown and fine, the type of *suabelicus* agrees with several other skins available from north-eastern Tanzania, in so doing corresponding well with the diagnostic characters laid down for *S. c. shimba* van Someren, 1941: Makadara Forest, Shimba Hills, south-eastern Kenya, by Ripley and Heinrich. When I reviewed the variation in this species in eastern and southern Africa (Clancey 1963), I was quite unable to appreciate the characters ascribed to *shimba* in the differential diagnosis (van Someren 1941), and while I have not again had access to the paratypical material of *shimba* before me when I wrote in late 1962, I see no reason to modify my earlier opinion that *shimba* and *suabelicus* are synonymous, an opinion now reinforced by a careful study of the type of *suabelicus*.

From a reading of the characters laid out by Ripley and Heinrich for their East African *Smithornis* taxa and examination of pertinent material, I submit that the *S. c. shimba* of these authors is in fact *S. c. suabelicus*. The type-localities of the two names, *shimba* and *suabelicus*, lie less than 150 km. apart.

In the case of their *S. c. suabelicus*, study of specimens from Lindi and Mikindani, Southern Province, Tanzania, and from many parts of Moçambique reveals that this is *S. c. cryptoleucus*, the range of which was recently modified in Clancey (1969). The range of *suabelicus* ("shimba") as given by Ripley and Heinrich now requires to be extended south to include north-eastern Tanzania south to about 7° S. lat., while that of *cryptoleucus* ("*suabelicus*") will be from the coastal lowland of the Southern Province, Tanzania, south through Moçambique to north-eastern Zululand and the Lebombo Mountains.

The populations present in the southern highlands of Tanzania appear to be *S. c. albigularis* Hartert, 1904: Canhoca, Cuanza Norte, Angola, though I have been unable to establish this with any degree of assurance, as I have not examined an adult ♀ from the region. In the race *albigularis*, the crown of the ♀ in other than very fresh dress is black like that of the ♂, and the sexes are indistinguishable. In the case of the ♀ of *S. c. suabelicus*, the crown is streaked, the feather shaft-streaks sepia, edged laterally with dark olive-brown, resulting in an almost uniform dark facies. In *cryptoleucus* the streaking is in sharp relief, with the dark shaft-streaking contrasted against grey lateral edging.

Acknowledgment: I am extremely grateful to Dr. G. Mauersberger of the Ornithological Department of the Institut für Spezielle Zoologie und Zoologisches Museum, Berlin, for the loan of the type of *S. c. suabelicus* and other material used by Hermann Grote in his studies.

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The original description by H. O. Forbes of the extinct New Zealand Musk Duck *Biziura delautouri*

by Graham S. Cowles

Received 5th October, 1970

In a recent paper, Harrison & Walker (1970) agreed with Scarlett (1969) in recognizing that a subfossil bone, a tarsometatarsus, collected in New Zealand some eighty years ago by H. O. Forbes and referred to since then as *Biziura lautouri*, differed only slightly in size from the still living Australian Musk Duck *B. lobata*, and subsequently after examination they identified it as belonging to this latter species. It was further considered, as Scarlett (*loc. cit.*) had also suggested, that the species *B. lautouri* was invalid as a name and should be regarded as being a *nomen nudum* due to the lack of any evidence to support a precise type locality and in the absence of any information to establish which bone was originally determined as the type element. In reaching this last conclusion all three authors have agreed with Lambrecht (1933).

Scarlett (*loc. cit.*) states: "In The Transactions of the New Zealand Institute, Vol. 24 p. 188, H. O. Forbes mentions a bone, or bones, of *Biziura* without